Professional Pet Sitters...

What do they do?



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PSI Pet Sitters international

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Devina Singh, owner of Devina Pet Care, Montreal, Quebec, Canada

The definition of pet sitting.

In 1997 Pet Sitters International (PSI) successfully campaigned to have “pet sitting” added to the Random House Dictionary.

“Pet sitting” is defined as “the act of caring for a pet in its own home while the owner is away.” Dog walking is also a form of pet sitting since it involves coming to the pet’s home to provide exercise and companionship. Caring for pets **in the clients’ homes** is what separates pet sitters from boarders or doggie daycares.



Karen Rossi, owner of Feather to Fur Pet Care LLC, Frederick, CO

What are the advantages of pet sitting (over other pet-care options)?

- Pets are happier and experience less stress at home in their familiar environment.
- Diet and exercise routines are uninterrupted.
- Travel trauma for both owner and pet is eliminated.
- Pet’s exposure to illness is minimized.

Occasionally, extenuating circumstances (i.e., a pet with special health issues or severe separation anxiety or repairs taking place in the pet’s home) warrants a pet sitter caring for a client’s pet in his or her own home, and the group-rate pet-sitter insurance coverage available to PSI members does offer a limited in-the-pet sitter’s -home pet care option.

What does a pet sitter do?

As the definition above indicates, pet sitters care for clients’ pets in the clients’ home. Pet owners often use pet sitters when they go on a vacation, travel for business, work long hours or when they are too sick or injured to care for their pet(s).

Pet sitters often offer more than one pet-sitting visit per day and some pet sitters offer overnight stays as well.

During the pet-sitting visits, pet sitters perform a variety of tasks, including:

- Feeding the pets and changing their water bowls
- Providing exercise and play time (may include walking the dog)
- Cleaning litter boxes and cleaning up any other pet messes
- Administering pet medications, if needed
- Providing lots of TLC!

Pet sitters also often bring in mail or newspapers and alternate blinds and lights to give the home a “lived-in look” if the owners are away. Pet sitters may also perform other tasks as requested by the pet owners.

What separates a hobbyist pet sitter from a professional pet sitter?

Often times, pet owners, and even news outlets, use the term “pet sitter” carelessly, referring to anyone—from a family friend to the neighborhood teenager asked to walk a dog—as a “pet sitter.” It is important pet owners (and prospective pet sitters and dog walkers) understand that pet sitting is a professional career and professional pet sitters and dog walkers offer peace of mind that other pet-care options cannot.



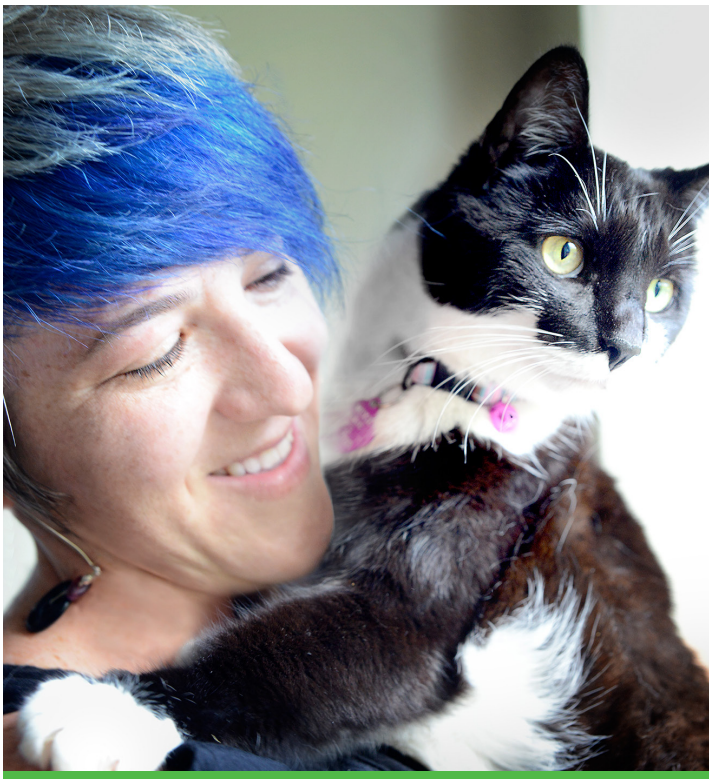
Anthony Garza, co-owner of
Paws on Durham Pet Sitting, Durham, NC

With the influx of pet-care directory sites popping up in the last couple of years and news stories touting pet sitting as an easy way to earn extra cash, more and more people are deciding to cash in on the growing need for pet care.

Those looking to enter the industry (and pet owners seeking pet sitters or dog walkers) should note that simply being listed on an online pet-sitter directory or even a nationally-publicized site does not automatically legitimize their pet-sitting business.

Individuals seeking to offer professional pet-sitting or dog-walking services should be able to answer “YES” to the following questions:

1. Does the pet sitter have the proper business license for your city or state?
2. Is the pet sitter insured and bonded?
3. Can the pet sitter provide proof of clear criminal history?
4. Does the pet sitter provide client references?
5. Will the pet sitter use a pet-sitting services agreement or contract?
6. Has the pet sitter completed PSI’s Certificate in Professional Pet Sitting and/or has he or she participated in pet-care training, such as pet first aid?
7. Is the pet sitter a member of a professional and educational association, such as Pet Sitters International?*



Adina Silberstein, owner of Queenie’s Pets LLC© , Philadelphia, PA

***Pet sitting is a requirement of PSI membership:** PSI’s mission and identity require that regular membership be limited to those who provide pet-sitting services. PSI recognizes that many pet-sitting businesses are rapidly growing and diversifying and welcomes members who offer services such as boarding, grooming, training, transportation, and waste removal **in addition to pet sitting**. PSI reserves the right to randomly audit member businesses to determine whether pet-sitting services are being offered. Links irrelevant to pet care are not permitted on the PSI locator.

Let's Keep in Touch!

We'd love to talk with you more. If you are not a PSI member, we look forward to welcoming you to the PSI family! Contact PSI Member Services at info@petsit.com or by phone at (336) 983-9222, option 1.

If you are already a PSI member, stay connected! Visit the Members' area of petsit.com frequently for the latest in member resources and updates, and join PSI's Professional Pet Sitters Chat on Facebook.

Established in 1994, Pet Sitters International (PSI) is the world's largest educational association for professional pet sitters, representing nearly 7,000 independent professional pet-sitting businesses in the United States, Canada and abroad.

PSI provides members with access to affordable bonding and liability insurance and educational resources including a comprehensive Certificate in Professional Pet Sitting Program, *Pet Sitter's WORLD* magazine, The Scoop e-news and PSI's annual Pet Sitter World Educational Conference & Expo.

Visit www.petsit.com to learn more.

Also be sure to visit The Pet Sitter Shop, the largest specialty retailer of products for pet sitters and pet-sitting business owners.

You can also follow us and join the conversation online:

The PSI Blog

PSI members only:

